

REMARKS

This Request for Reconsideration is offered in response to the Office Action of June 15, 2004.

At the outset, the Applicant is filing Requests for Reexamination for U.S. Patent Nos. 6,290,391 and 6,347,885, the source of the claims copied by the present application.

Moreover, an RCE and a request for suspension of prosecution of the present application during the above-described reexaminations are filed concurrently herewith.

The Office Action has rejected Claims 40-42 and 48-50 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by the Thomas reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,713,669) or the Dobreski reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,669,715). Similarly, the Office Action rejected Claims 40-42 and 48-50 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by the Stolmeier reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,257,763); rejected Claims 40 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by the Thieman reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,956,924); and rejected Claims 41, 42, 49 and 50 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the Thieman reference in view of the Hustad reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,456,928).

It is respectfully submitted that the presently pending claims were copied from issued patents (these issued patents cited the Thomas, Dobreski and Hustad references). As the issued claims were found patentable over these references, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are presumed valid and that it would be inequitable and inconsistent for these claims to be rejected in the present application. It would likewise be inequitable and inconsistent for the present applicant to be required to amend the copied claims or make statements which may be construed as file wrapper estoppels in order to gain allowance of these claims.

In the event that these claims are found to be patentable in the above-identified reexaminations, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are likewise patentable to the applicant, and that interferences should be promptly declared.

Respectfully submitted,



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